

NSC BRIEFING

28 January 1959

MIDDLE EAST NOTES

- I. Nasir, besides remaining concerned over the unresolved situation in Iraq, seems to be having further troubles in his Syrian back-yard.
 - A. An effort may be under way aimed at stripping the all-powerful Col. Sarraj, Syria's minister of interior and chief policeman, of his authority.
 - B. Sarraj's enemies are capitalizing on the fact that top Syrian Communists "got away;" that persons around him, including his wife and some of his favorite officers, have dubious associations; and that he has apparently blundered in some of his operations in Iraq.
 - C. Nasir still has to move carefully in Syria, however, and because of resentment of Egyptian influence there he cannot afford to antagonize too many people at one time.
- II. Israel is still building up military strength.
 - A. New jet fighters--Super-Mysteres--have arrived from France.
 2. These deliveries show continued close French-Israeli relationship.
 - B. Army attache in Tel Aviv has also reported "creeping build-up" which could be aimed at some action in spring, perennial danger period in Arab-Israeli relations.

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Next 1 Page(s) In Document Denied